

# Fighting 13th



Volume 2, Jan. 2005

The 13th MEU Newsletter

www.13thmeu.usmc.mil

## MEU bids farewell to war hero

### Ops Chief to retire after 30 years of service

Staff Sgt. Jesus A. Lora  
*13th MEU PA Chief*

July 1971, 6,100 exhausted American troops returned from Vietnam, Saigon released 3,000 Viet Cong prisoners and 80,187 die-hard fans watched the Pittsburgh Steelers take the Super Bowl away from the Dallas Cowboys at the Orange Bowl in Miami. Meanwhile, at an Austin, Texas high school football game, a quiet, all-American boy, dressed in a spit-shined marching uniform, took the stage during the halftime show.

"I enjoyed playing the percussion drums in my high school marching band," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Paul D. Clark, S-3 operations. "It was special to me because the year before, the band was segregated and finally I was the only black band member."

For Clark, his high school memories were filled with Vietnam, from flashes on the TV to watching his neighbor return home from the war.

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Courtesy of Master Gunnery Sgt. Paul D. Clark

*Clark poses for his Army National Guard picture in 1975. He spent one year in the Guard before transferring to the Marine Corps. Clark retires in November after 30 years of military service.*

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# News for the MEU

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## Tax preparation

Save some time this tax season. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance office opens Jan. 24th. The office is open Tuesday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The office is located in building 1687 on mainside.

Servicemembers need to bring dependents' social security cards, military identification, W-2 and 1099 tax forms, deductions/credits, checkbook or bank routing and account numbers and a copy of last year's tax return. For more information, call 763-2518 or go to <http://www.pendleton.usmc.mil/base/vita/home.asp>.

## Tuition assistance

MARADMIN 576/04 addresses Marine Corps Tuition Assistance Funding Policy. This MARADMIN provides amplification regarding TA policy. All active duty Marines, and reservists on continuous active duty, are eligible for TA per the instructions and policies established by the MARADMIN. TA funds are authorized up to 100% of tuition not to exceed \$250 per

semester hour equivalent and \$4,500 per individual per fiscal year. Service members are responsible for the portion of tuition and other courses not funded by TA. TA

is authorized for officers only if they agree to remain on active duty for two continuous years after completing the TA funded course. If allowed to voluntarily resign before the two-year obligation is served, the service member will repay the government a prorated amount of TA expended in accordance with the amount of time remaining on active duty. The policy may NOT be waived. Deployed Marines are eligible for TA, testing, and approved independent study programs through the Marine Corps

## Judging education's value



Sgt. Charles E. Moore

Major William N. Pigott, staff judge advocate, talks with an incoming Marine. Pigott, who also serves as the 13th MEU education officer, will be teaching several college classes during the MEU's work-ups and throughout the deployment. Classes are offered through Central Texas College and are scheduled after work hours and during lunch. "It's a good opportunity for enlisted Marines," Pigott said. "If you don't take classes, you'll find yourself in the minority."

Base Camp Pendleton Education Office. For more information regarding tuition assistance, predeployment and deployed education programs that will enable you take

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# News for the MEU

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## News

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advantage of these opportunities, please contact Major W. N. Pigott, 13th MEU education officer.

### New prohibited substances

The new Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2004 amends the definition of "anabolic steroid" to include tetrahydrogestrinone (THG), androstenedione, and specific related chemicals used to promote muscle growth. Specifically, androstenedione, or any andro- containing substance, a steroid precursor, will now be listed as a schedule 3 controlled substance.

Article 112a, UCMJ, makes wrongful use, possession, manufacture, distribution, import or introduction on an installation, vessel, vehicle or aircraft used by or under the control of the armed forces, of all drugs on schedules 1-5 illegal.

## Pulling the legs



Sgt. Charles E. Moore

Cpl. Ramon Morin, administrative clerk, helps set up a Base-X tent. Several Marines from the 13th MEU command element practiced setting up and tearing down the tents during the week of Jan. 10.

For more information, see MARADMIN 011/05.

### Resale lot

MCB Camp Pendleton provides a resale lot for authorized personnel who wish to display their vehicles for sale. The resale lot is located on Rattlesnake Canyon Road across from the 16 Area Fire Station. Individuals who wish to display their vehicles in the base resale lot are advised of the following:

1. Vehicles must be properly registered aboard MCB Camp Pendleton (i.e., appropriate base decal or temporary pass), have a valid state registration and valid insurance.
  2. Owners must register their vehicles at the Support Services Division, Police Records section, Bldg 1523 (business hours are 0730-1530, Mon-Fri) and receive a placard before parking in the resale lot.
  3. The following vehicles are authorized in the resale lot:
    - a. Car
    - b. Trucks
    - c. Recreational Vehicles (RV's)
    - d. Boats
    - e. Motorcycles
    - f. Trailers
    - g. And all other vehicles which are required to be registered in California or another state.
  4. The Support Services Division Resale Lot Placard shall be affixed to the driver's window or front windshield so it is visible from outside the vehicle. Vehicles can be registered for the resale lot for a maximum of 90 days.
  5. Vehicles that have expired resale lot placards or no resale lot placards are subject to towing in accordance with BO P5000.2.
  6. Any vehicle identified as a safety or environmental hazard (due to fluid leak), is subject to immediate towing at the owner's expense.
- Additional requirements will be explained to applicants during the registration process.

# Feature

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## Clark

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"All my teen years were filled with Vietnam and the killing of the Viet Cong. So my two best friends, one a captain of the football team, the other a school 'playa' with the girls joined the Army in April 1975."

Clark, like his father, who served 25 years in the Air force, and his two brothers, one an enlisted airman, the other a fellow Marine, chose the armed forces.

Clark's military career actually began in the Army National Guard. He recalled savoring the good life with the Guard until December of 1975.

"My training with the Army was not long enough to miss home and not very hard, so I knew one thing for sure, Vietnam was coming and my training with the Army made me no more ready for a war than the man on the moon."

In April of 1976, Clark's dad decided that the Air Force would be the right fit for his youngest boys. So he dragged both of them to the local recruiting office where his dad had an old friend. The recruiter asked them to return the next day.

"We came back the next day and the Air Force recruiter was not there. The only office that had been open was the Marine Corps; the rest was history."

And history it was. Clark shared some eventful memories starting with Marine Corps boot camp where he and his brother worked it so they could be together to share in the boot camp experience.

"The only time I thought I had made a mistake was when I got to boot camp and saw my brother standing in a formation with a look of pure fear on his face," said Clark. "I thought my brother was

fearless, so I didn't understand why he had a look of fear. I went over to talk to him when our troop handler went in to check on the time we were to be in the chow hall. He (his brother) saw me and all he had time to say was 'I guess you didn't get my letter!' That's when I saw my first Drill Instructor and I remember saying, 'This is not going to be good!'"

Over time, Clark saw things settle down. He learned that drill instructors were not there to kill anyone, only to train recruits. He also learned of Marine Corps specific bugs that bit, but left no tangible mark.

"When things settled down and I started learning from my drill instructors, something happened," said Clark. "In the old days it was called the Marine bug bite and once the bug bit you, you were in for life; I got bit in boot camp."

Certain rumors fill the few free minutes recruits enjoy during boot camp. He said talk of the "Rock" is one topic that has filled many bedtime stories when the lights went out at taps.

"The 'Rock,' when I was in boot camp, is what they talked about," said Clark. "I was going to the rock across the pond. It was said that all the Vietnam Veterans who could not adjust to civilian life and who had incurable diseases, were left there on a part of Okinawa that no one could get to except by air. I was not looking forward to that. Okinawa was where I first felt that the Marine Corps was going through some growing pains, stuff left over from the 60's. Off-base liberty was a shock. I had never seen anything like it and had spent a lot of money on nothing. I did that for about three months and started to learn how to live on Okinawa. I became salty."

Memories are the lifeblood of the Corps. With

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Capt. K.D. Robbins  
*Family Readiness Officer*

With 2004 a distant memory, the Marines and Sailors of the 13<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit have taken 2005 by storm. Mid-January marks the “chop date” for the MEU team. The 13<sup>th</sup> MEU welcomes the Marines and Sailors of Battalion Landing Team 2/1 (BLT 2/1), MEU Service Support Group 13 (MSSG-13) and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 (HMM-163).

As the pre-deployment work-up cycle begins for the Marines and Sailors of the Fighting 13<sup>th</sup>, so does the pre-deployment work-up cycle begin for our families. The MEU Public Affairs Office will offer valuable information through our various venues to include our 13<sup>th</sup> MEU website, [www.usmc.mil/13meu](http://www.usmc.mil/13meu) and the “Fighting 13th” monthly newsletter. This information will help you and your families to assume a proactive role involving administrative, personal and legal matters associated with a deployment and life in the military.

This month, we focus on the documents both you and your family must have in order prior to deployment this summer. We’ve enclose a basic checklist to help you organize your paperwork.

Taking time to insure that all of the documents listed on the right side of this page are in order will insure that you and your families are prepared to handle administrative issues that will inevitably occur during our deployment.

## **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Sgt. Jason L. Lovett, motor transport chief, and his wife on the birth of their daughter Jada. Jada was born Jan. 6. She weighed 5 lbs., 8 oz, and measured 18 inches long.

## **Predeployment Paperwork Checklist**

- ☐ Divorce Decrees
- ☐ Child custody and support documents
- ☐ Death Certificates (immediate family)
- ☐ Bank Accounts (Checking/Savings)
- ☐ Savings Bonds and Securities
- ☐ Wills (Member/Spouse)
- ☐ Power of Attorney (General or Specific)
- ☐ Adoption Papers
- ☐ Executor Appointment
- ☐ Medical Power of Attorney (Children)
- ☐ Valid Passport (Member/Spouse/Children)
- ☐ Valid Military ID (Member/Spouse/Children)
- ☐ Birth Certificates
- ☐ Marriage Certificates
- ☐ Naturalization or Citizenship Papers
- ☐ Insurance Policies (home, life, auto, etc.)
- ☐ Deeds
- ☐ Mortgages
- ☐ Lease agreements
- ☐ Social Security Cards
- ☐ Military Records (medical/dental)
- ☐ Automobile Title (or loan papers)
- ☐ Tax Returns

## **Upcoming Events**

### **2005 dates of interest.**

- Jan 17-28 MEU Rapid Response Planning Course (R2P2)(Coronado)
- Feb 14-18 Marine Expeditionary Unit Exercise (MEUEX)
- March 19- 01 April Training In An Urban Environment (TRUEX)



# MEU's around the World

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## Humanitarian assistance planning continues as 15th MEU (SOC) nears affected regions

Lance Cpl. Scott L. Eberle  
*Correspondent, 15<sup>TH</sup> Meu*

### ABOARD USS

**BONHOMME RICHARD (Jan. 2, 2005)** — In the wake of the recent tsunami that swept across the Indian Ocean and claimed more than 100,000 lives, the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) has begun gearing up for one of the largest Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations in history.

While heading full speed to the affected area, Marines and Sailors have been working hard to prepare thousands of Meals Ready to Eat, pallets full of purified water and other supplies to hit the ground to immediately help relieve the suffering of thousands of victims left devastated by the catastrophe.

Scores of people were left homeless, in need of food and clean water when giant waves ripped across several coastal nations in the Indian Ocean. The 15th MEU (SOC) was on their way to the Western Pacific when the natural disaster took place. They were scheduled to spend five days of training in Guam before being called to provide assistance in the region. The USS Bonhomme Richard and USS Duluth spent just

a few short hours in Guam loading supplies needed for the HAO.

On New Year's Day a working party of Marines went through more than 750 cases of MREs and removed meals that contained food not appropriate for some of the cultures affected by the tsunami.

"The entire 15th MEU will not all be going to same location. On January 4th, the USS Duluth will break off from the rest of the pack to provide assistance in Indonesia," according to Staff Sgt. Shannon E. Middleton, the fire support chief

and assistant operations chief for the MEU.

The Marines and Sailors aboard Bonhomme Richard are scheduled to land in Sri Lanka, while the Duluth will be providing critical aviation support to Indonesia, according to Staff Sgt. Julio C. Dominguez, the engineer chief for the MEU Service Support Group.

Because the Marines and Sailors aboard Duluth will be performing different missions, Marines with the Battalion Landing Team have

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Lance Cpl. Scott L. Eberle

*Lance Cpl. Konrad U. Nikolao, 21, (left) and Sgt. Shannon R. Haynes, 29, of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) help prepare thousands of MREs (meal ready to eat) to hand out to victims of the catastrophic tsunami that recently struck in the Indian Ocean.*

# MEU's (cont.)

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## 15th

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cross-decked from the BHR to the Duluth, in addition to MEU Service Support Group-15 coming from Duluth to the BHR.

"The MSSG has been preparing for a humanitarian mission of this type for about 12 months now and is more prepared for [an actual] mission," said Dominguez. "By bringing more MSSG Marines to the Bonhomme Richard, we are trying to raise our capability to meet the requirements of the HAO [in Sri Lanka]."

Originally, 15th MEU was headed to the Arabian Gulf for scheduled training, but since this event occurred, many of the Marines said they are more than happy to lend a hand. "Anything we can do to help is good," said Lance Cpl. Pedro Garcia Jr., a 22-year-old radio operator with the BLT. "As long as the disaster gets cleaned up and the people get food and water, that's what is important."

The ACE will be playing a key role in supporting the HAO, according to Michael C. Callaghan, a CH-46 pilot for the 15th MEU. "Our first objective is to get our humanitarian aid supplies from our ships into camps established in the country. Once all of our supplies are in the camps, our focus will shift to distributing the supplies throughout the country."

Two CH-46s will move from the Bonhomme Richard to the Duluth to help support them with their side of the mission according to Callaghan.

It's not just Marines that are cross decking from the Duluth to the Bonhomme Richard. "The Duluth is handing over a bulldozer, sea tractor, and a tram, and we already have an M-9 Ace to take into country with us," according to Gunnery Sgt. Jason E. Cornelison, the Combat Cargo assistant for well deck operations. "We are basically taking all the supplies of a construction crew to help tear down

the rubble and rebuild the area."

"Along with the tractors, the MEU will be packing chainsaws, shovels, lumber, over 750 cases of MREs, and 900 cases of purified water to distribute to the victims," said Cornelison. "Combat Cargo is ready and standing by to help in any way necessary to support the humanitarian mission."

## Late night radio



Sgt. Charles E. Moore

Lance Cpl. Sam S. Holzknacht, radio operator, works late into the night to test new equipment. Holzknacht uses an AN-PRC 117 radio to test equipment that could aid in gathering intelligence.

# Feature (cont.)

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## Clark

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Clark's 30 years of service, his memory is one massive tale.

"There are several things that really stick in my mind," said Clark. "One night we were getting ready to cross the line-of-departure during operation Desert Storm. The radio cracked and all we heard was 'Gas-Gas-Gas this is not a drill.' A Fox Company vehicle went by with a US flag on it and the running lights were on. So there we sat all night with our gas masks on, and I'm thinking I may have to tell some Pfc. to take off his mask. In a hail, the word came to unmask, not all clear; I had to ask a Marine to take off his gas mask and give the all clear. This really made me feel uneasy. Once we got to the other side of the minefields and moved towards the airport, what I saw was mind blowing. It was the middle of the day and it was pitch black. We had reached the burning oil fields. Sometime later, we arrived at the other side. We met our first Iraqi enemies. The firefight lasted well into the night and later into an "L" shape ambush.

"The second memory is when I was taken to a mass gravesite in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom," said Clark. "Looking at all those people with holes in their heads and their heads tied with a bag, their hands and feet tied, while people walked around looking for their family members, kind of took me back."

His training has been exceptional and vast. To learn Clark's secrets to success, one need look no further than a Marine Corps textbook. The Marine Corps "manual" is filled with chapters on "how to" perform. Clark sums it up in many ways.

"I had to train myself to turn off the TV so that I could get my required eight hours of sleep, in



Sgt. Charles E. Moore

*Master Gunnery Sgt. Clark poses with his original boot camp picture. Inset in the frame is a photo of his graduation from Sergeants' Course. Clark ends a 30-year military career in November.*

order to do both my job and my physical fitness (training)," said Clark.

"When I was a young Marine, the non-commissioned officers, and staff NCO's, mostly staff sergeants, would make it a point to let anybody below them know that they were not going to be beat in the physical fitness test. Watching them train every day stays with me to this day." He

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## Clark

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continued, "I get my energy when I'm on a 26-mile hike and I see Marines ... I see them asking themselves how he does it."

"What has made me stay so long has never changed. The Marine Corps has never promised me anything," said Clark. "If I wanted anything I had to work for it. When you're young and somebody is talking to you about joining something, all you hear is how rough it's going to be and how tired you're going to be; there's a chance that you might not make it. Some may say, 'I can't do that,' I'll show him and off we go."

The merry-go-round will stop one day, and the Marine Corps Hymn will soon fade, but Marines never fade, nor do they walk away in some distant sunset. Marines have tradition, a secret cult built by generation after generation of past heroic Marines. They leave a legacy that continues far beyond when bodies are returned to the earth and their blues are laid to rest. For Clark, it's a legacy of memories that will live forever. He has touched many lives and sparked hopes and dreams.

"I think the dream starts after high school," said Clark. "In school all you think about is what you're going to do when you graduate. I came into the Marines and I have seen the world, good and bad. In the Marine Corps you don't accomplish your dreams you accomplish your missions. I believe I have accomplished my mission. I will bring the things I have learned to the civilian community to start my life after the Marine Corps."

"I would say that my time in the Marine Corps has been a little of everything," said Clark. "I have been places people that I grew up with

can only dream of and I have lost a lot of friends. I have done things that have made me so miserable. But, while you're doing it, you have to laugh because you can't believe that your body should have gone out so long ago."

Family is the foundation, the heart that keeps the home fires burning. For Clark it's the foundation of his family's legacy. As Clark ends his career, his son and daughter are venturing into their own challenges and fears in the Marine Corps. The journey continues, his legacy lives strong and his family continues with the Corps.

"My family is glad this is almost over," said Clark. "My wife wants what is left of me for herself and I have a new granddaughter that I have to spoil and family members to hang out with. It's something everybody in my family is looking forward to."

Clark's travels kept him, and his family, in constant motion for the past 30 years. He left his mark at nearly every corner of the globe. He completed a successful tour on the drill field and deployed with more than six infantry battalions.

"The one duty station that stands out is Atlanta. I went there with no idea what it took to be an officer of Marines," said Clark. "I found out what it took to be a Marine officer. It made me a better Staff NCO. I now have a whole picture. It was not just about them and us; it was just about us Marines."

## Birthdays

### January Birthdays:

Sgt. Brian N. Stevenson, Jan. 3.

Capt. Damian L. Spooner Jan. 20.

### February Birthdays:

Sgt. Tory E. Swearingen, Feb. 10.

Sgt. Dennis J. Wininger, Feb. 24.